

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 ERDA-05
FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2078
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7630

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: LOS, GR

SUBJ: GREEK LOS INTERESTS

1. A GREEK MFA WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIAL WHO ATTENDED THE LAST LAW OF THE SEA (LOS) SESSION IN NEW YORK TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT FROM THE GREEK VIEWPOINT THE SESSION HAD ACCOMPLISHED LITTLE. THE SESSION HAD BEEN ESPECIALLY DISAPPOINTING WITH RESPECT TO TWO OF THE THREE ISSUES WHICH GREECE CONSIDERS TO BE KEY ONES, HE ADDED, EXPLAINING THAT THE GREEK DELEGATION WAS NOT PLEASED WITH DEVELOPMENTS ON THE QUESTIONS OF DELIMITATION AND OF THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL STRAITS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HOWEVER, THE GOG WAS SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGED BY THE DISCUSSION ON THE QUESTION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELVES OF ISLANDS.

2. THE MFA OFFICIAL SAID THAT, IN SPITE OF AN APPARENT TREND TO
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THE CONTRARY, THE GOG WAS STILL HOPEFUL THAT ITS POSITION ON DELIMITATION FAVORING THE PRINCIPLE OF THE MEDIAN LINE (INSTEAD OF GIVING PRIORITY TO EQUITY) WOULD EVENTUALLY BE ADOPTED BY THE LOS CONFERENCE. HE DISAGREED THAT THE MAJORITY OF STATES PREFERRED EQUITY, ARGUING THAT IN A RECENT STRAW VOTE THE MEDIAN LINE PRINCIPLE HAD 20 BACKERS WHEREAS EQUITY RECEIVED ONLY 8 (INCLUDING TURKEY, HE NOTED).

3. AS TO THE QUESTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF STRAITS, OUR SOURCE STATED THAT GREECE RECOGNIZED SHE WAS FACING A LOSING PROPOSITION IN TRYING TO GET SUPPORT FOR HER PREFERRED POSITION OF RESTRICTING ACCESS. THEREFORE, HE SAID, GREECE WOULD NO LONGER ATTEMPT TO BUCK THE PREVAILING TIDE, BUT WOULD VERY LIKELY EXPRESS RESERVATIONS WHEN VOTING ON THE FINAL LANGUAGE. THE MFA OFFICIWR WENT ON TO SAY THAT BECAUSE OF ITS DISPUTE WITH TURKEY, GREECE FELT COMPELLED FOR SECURITY REASONS TO RESTRICT THE NUMBER OF STRAITS IN THE AEGEAN ACCORDED "FREE PASSAGE" STATUS, ALTHOUGH HE DECLINED TO GO INTO SPECIFICS AS TO WHICH STRAITS MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE GOG RESERVATIONS.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE ISSUE OF INSULAR CONTINENTAL SHELVES, THE GREEK OFFICIAL EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE. HE PREDICTED THAT THE FINAL DOCUMENT WOULD MAINTAIN THE PRINCIPLE THAT ISLANDS DO POSSESS THEIR OWN CONTINENTAL SHELVES, A PROVISION THAT IS KEY TO THE GREEK POSITION IN THE AEGEAN.

5. FINALLY, REFERRING TO THE RECENT ARBITRATION COURT AWARD ON THE DISPUTE BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE ON THE DEMARCATION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL, THE GREEK OFFICIAL VOLUNTEERED HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE DECISION WAS VERY DAMAGING TO THE GREEK SIDE, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE BRITISH ISLANDS HAD, IN EFFECT, BEEN ENCLAVED. WHILE OFFICIALLY THE GOG'S POSITION WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT TO COMMENT SINCE IT WAS STILL "STUDYING THE DECISION," HE CONTINUED THAT THE TURKS MIGHT WELL SEEK TO USE THE DECISION TO BOLSTER THEIR CASE IN THE AEGEAN. THE ONLY LOGICAL GOG RESPONSE, HE CONCLUDED, WOULD BE THAT THE ARBITRATORS THEMSELVES HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SCILLY ISLES CONSTITUTED A "SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE," AND, THEREFORE, THE GOG COULD DENY THAT THE DECISION SET AN IMPORTANT PRECEDENT FOR THE AEGEAN.

MILLS

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